

“How We Process Earth Materials”

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For centuries, people have relied on Earth materials to sustain their lifestyles, from brick houses to iPhones. However, despite their prevalence in nearly every aspect of our lives, most people are unaware of how great an impact natural resources have on society. It's important we understand what materials exactly are being processed, and how best to employ them in an environmentally friendly way.

The two types of natural substances in consumer industries are renewable and non-renewable resources. While renewable resources like lumber and wind have limitless availability, non-renewable resources like fossil fuel cannot be replenished. Examples include petroleum, a liquid found in oil reservoirs which is drilled and then extracted. The bitumen is then refined through intense heating which becomes gasoline, asphalt, or jet fuel. In the 21st century we've largely relied on oils and fossil fuels to supply the global market, leading to widespread resource diminishment and problematic rising temperatures.

In order to develop policies that allow us to derive value from these raw materials while maintaining morals, we must find a healthy balance between harvesting necessary energy sources and protecting the surrounding biosphere. According to NASA, the solution will require both a globally-coordinated response and local efforts on a regional level in cities. Regulations on deforestation and mineral consumption must be enacted. Exploration into new renewable sources should be encouraged as well. Individuals can also help combat environmental degradation by recycling more, conserving electricity, spreading awareness, etc. Together, we will find a way to solve this issue!

As socio-economic demands continue rising alongside increasingly urgent ecological dilemmas, we as global citizens have been called to action. Our planet is the most valuable asset available, so it's paramount we continue to respect and appreciate Earth materials if we want to continue calling this place home in the future!